

APPLICATION NO. 10/013,072  
DOCKET NO. P2011/N7696**COMPLETE LISTING OF CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Claim 1 (currently amended)** A batch method for producing a high flash point pitch, comprising:

maintaining the temperature of a batch of soft pitch at a substantially steady level, and introducing a sparging gas while maintaining the temperature of the batch at a substantially steady level with a temperature variance of no greater than about 10°C.

**Claim 2 (original)** The method of claim 1, wherein the soft pitch is produced by:

- (1) providing a batch of coal tar; and
- (2) heating the batch of coal tar until the batch of coal tar becomes a soft pitch.

**Claim 3 (original)** The method of claim 2, wherein:

in step (2), the batch of coal tar is heated until it obtains a softening point of between about 40°C to about 80°C.

**Claim 4 (original)** The method of claim 3, wherein:

in step (2), the batch of coal tar is heated until it obtains a softening point of between about 70°C to about 75°C.

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**Claim 5 (original) The method of claim 2, wherein:**

in step (2), the batch of coal tar is heated until it obtains a temperature of about 260° to about 270°C.

**Claim 6 (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the batch is maintained at a temperature of between about 255°C and about 275°C.**

**Claim 7 (canceled)**

**Claim 8 (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the sparging gas is steam.**

**Claim 9 (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the sparging gas is an inert gas.**

**Claim 10 (original) The method of claim 9, wherein the sparging gas is steam, nitrogen, argon, helium, neon, or mixtures thereof.**

**Claim 11 (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the temperature is maintained at a substantially steady level until the softening point of the batch reaches about 90°C.**

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Claim 12 (original) The method of claim 11, wherein the temperature is maintained until the flash point of the batch is higher than about 270°C as measured by the Cleveland Open Cup test.

Claim 13 (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the flash point in the batch increases at a rate faster than the rate the softening point increases.

Claim 14 (original) The method of claim 12, wherein the flash point is from about 270°C to about 300°C.

Claim 15 (currently amended) A method of producing pitch for a carbon or graphite body, comprising:

- (1) providing a batch of coal tar and providing a still;
- (2) charging the batch into the still;
- (3) heating the batch to a temperature to obtain a softening point of between about 70°C to 75°C; and
- (4) maintaining said temperature at a steady level with a temperature variance of no greater than about 10°C while introducing a sparging gas into the batch until the Mettler softening point reaches about 90°C, and the flash point of the batch is at least about 270°C as measured by the Cleveland Open Cup Test.

Claims 16-24 (withdrawn)